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Award Number: W81XWH-10-1-0709

TITLE: Tracking Origins of Prostate Cancer - An Innovative In Vivo Modeling

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REPORT DATE: September 201H

TYPE OF REPORT: Annual

PREPARED FOR: U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command  
Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: Approved for Public Release;  
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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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<b>1. REPORT DATE</b> September 201H		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Annual		<b>3. DATES COVERED</b> 1 September 201G– 31 August 201H	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b>  Tracking Origins of Prostate Cancer - An Innovative In Vivo Modeling				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b> W81XWH-10-1-0709	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b>  Kethandapatti Balaji Xiaolan Fang, Kennyth Gyabaah, Sandy Sinkovitz, et al.  <b>E-Mail:</b> kbalaji@wfubmc.edu				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>  Wake Forest University Winston-Salem, NC 27157				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5012				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>  Heterogeneity, variable and often unpredictable clinical course are fundamental challenges in management of patients with prostate cancer. To make rapid advances in understanding of disease mechanism that can be translated to clinical care in short order, there is an immediate need for innovative in vivo disease models that accurately recapitulate human disease at cellular level. We propose to develop an innovative and hitherto not attempted in vivo prostate cancer model that will delineate the exact cell of origin through different stages of prostate cancer development and progression. We propose to study possible cell(s) of origin for prostate cancer by combinatorial expression of florescent magenta, cyan and yellow primary color proteins in prostate at development in mice. The study includes (1) Construction of "Prorainbow" plasmid with fluorescent proteins (XFPs) under control by prostate epithelial and basal cell-specific promoters. (2) Establish mouse line with the resulting "Prorainbow" construct and generation of transgenic mice by crossing with Cre mice. (3) Study the transgenic Prorainbow mice under normal and oncogenic conditions. The study is expected to produce in vivo animal of prostate cancer with unique capabilities.					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Prostate cancer, in vivo model, Prorainbow, tumor development					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>  UU	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>  FI	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> USAMRMC
<b>a. REPORT</b> U	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> U	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> U			<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (include area code)

## Annual Report

Title: Tracking Origins of Prostate Cancer – an Innovative *in vivo* Modeling

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## Introduction

Prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer of men and the most common cancer overall (1). The cancer cells may metastasize from the prostate to other parts of the body, particularly the bones and lymph nodes. About 20% of patients undergoing radical prostatectomy develop metastasis beyond 5 years, suggesting metastasis is an early event and removal of primary tumor does not significantly decrease the rate of metastasis. Thus, understanding the role of the genetic changes leading to origination and development of primary tumor and metastasis would provide for a targeting strategy to clinical therapy. The goal of this project is to study the origin of cancer cells within the prostate. Since development of human prostate cancer proceeds through a series of defined states, we would utilize a newly developed fluorescent protein labeling technique, Brainbow, which has been used to study the nervous system development in Brain (2). Similar to the 'Brainbow' concept we propose 'Prorainbow' modeling to track prostate cell proliferation and differentiation by labeling individual early prostate precursor cell a unique color. In case of a tumor or metastasis, we can track down the ancestor normal cell by matching to the tumor cell color. We can then track these color distributions and pattern changes with time course, which will build up a dynamic vision of prostate cancer progression. Also, we want to examine functions of Protein Kinase D1 (PKD1) and Phosphatase and Tensin homolog (Pten) in conditional knockout mice in the development of cancer formation and metastasis in the prostate. Successful development of fluorescent labeled *in vivo* animal model will be unique in the field of prostate cancer research and provide much needed advance to understand progression of prostate cancer.

We proposed to testify the stated hypothesis with following aims:

- 1) Construction of 'Prorainbow' plasmid with fluorescent proteins (XFPs) under control by prostate epithelial and basal cell-specific promoters.
- 2) Establish mouse line with the resulting 'Prorainbow' construct and generation of transgenic mice by crossing with Cre mice.
- 3) Study the transgenic Prorainbow mice under normal and oncogenic conditions.

## Body

### **Aim (1) Construction of 'Prorainbow' plasmid with fluorescent proteins (XFPs) under control by prostate epithelial and basal cell-specific promoters.**

*Task I.* Generation of *Probasin* promoter controlled XFP.  
This part is done and was reported in prior annual report.

*Task II.* Generation of *Cytokeratin 5* promoter controlled XFP.  
This part is done and was reported in prior annual report.

### **Aim (2) Establish mouse line with the resulting 'Prorainbow' construct and generation of transgenic mice by crossing with Cre mice.**

*Task I.* Obtain institutional approval for animal study.

This part is done and was reported in prior annual report.

*Task II.* Generation of Prorainbow construct expressing transgenic mice (n=3~5).  
We've generated nine PB-XFP transgenic mouse founders, and eight CRK5-XFP founders as described in prior annual report.

*Task III.* Cross-breeding of Cre mice with Prorainbow transgenic mice.  
Three different breeding schemes were planned to validate the Prorainbow system and study normal prostate development.

- 1) ROSA-CreER X PB-XFP
- 2) PB-Cre4 x CRK5-XFP

### 3) PB-Cre4 x CMV-XFP

After the founder mice (nine PB-XFP animals and eight CRK5-XFP animals) were transferred to Wake Forest University and passed the quarantine requirements, they were bred with Cre-mice (ROSA-Cre or PB-Cre) to test the expression of fluorescent proteins (XFP) in prostate.

For the first breeding method, ROSA-CreER mice were ordered from JaxMice (stock 008463, B6.129-Gt(ROSA)26 Sor tm1(cre/ERT2)Tyj/J). For PB-XFP founders, six out of nine lines (511, 512, 513, 517, 518 and 520) were kept for testing. Line 514 was lost due to low transgene inheritance (the female founder gave birth to three litters and all the pups screened were wild type). Line 515 was lost due to health concerns (the female founder had severe malocclusion, was found dead a few weeks after arrival). Line 516 was lost due to fighting (the male founder was severely wounded by the breeding female mouse and the injury did not heal well necessitating euthanasia). The remaining lines were bred with ROSA-Cre animals using specific schemes (Fig.1A, 1D), and we got male pups with correct genotypes for five lines (Fig.2A, line 511 as an example).

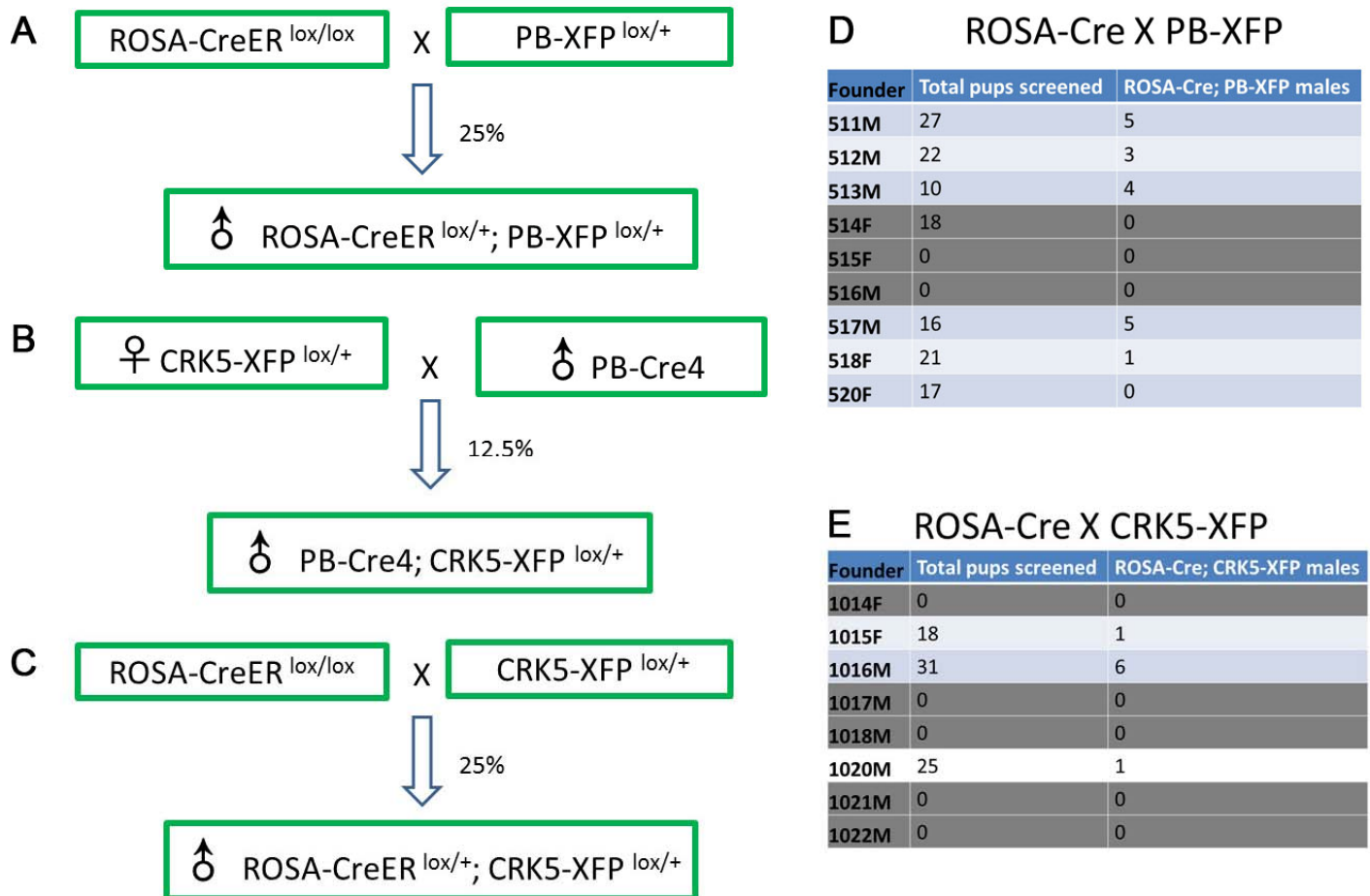


Figure 1 Breeding schemes for transgenic animals carrying PB-XFP and CRK5-XFP. A, breeding between ROSA-CreER and PB-XFP animals. B, breeding between PB-Cre4 males and CRK5-XFP females. C, breeding between ROSA-CreER and CRK5 animals. D, summary of screening results of ROSA-CreER; PB-XFP animals. E, summary of screening results of ROSA-CreER; CRK5-XFP animals.



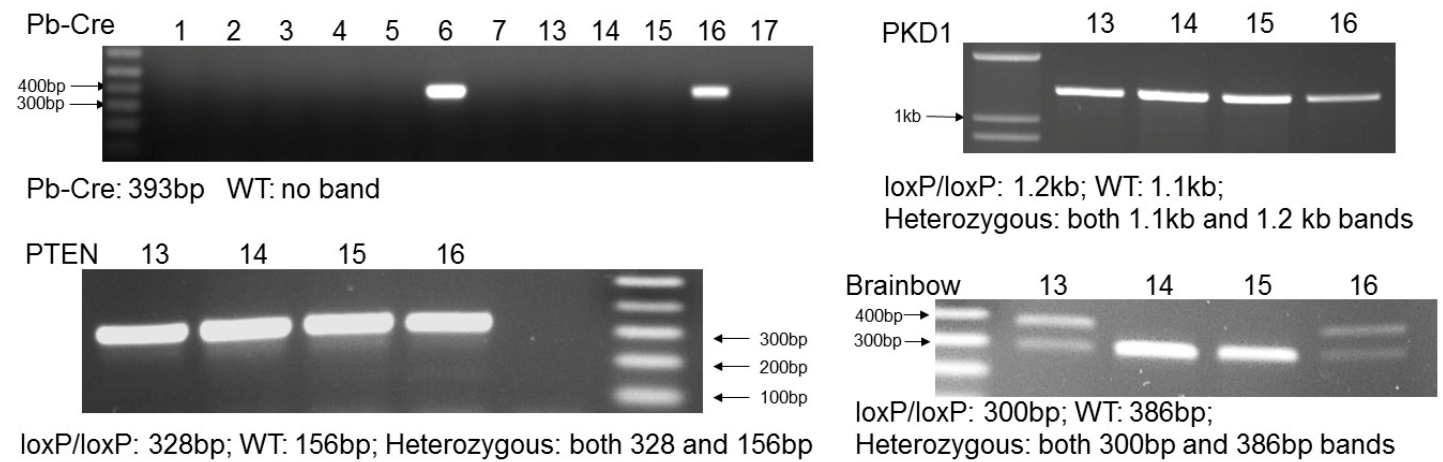


Figure 3 Screening for PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animal with CMV-XFP (Brainbow 2.1). Mouse#16 is a positive candidate.

### Aim (3) Study the transgenic Prorainbow mice under normal and oncogenic conditions.

*Task 1.* Evaluate combinatorial expression of XFP in prostate of Prorainbow mice.

For ROSA-Cre X PB-XFP breeding, among the six remaining founder lines, we got five lines with ROSA-Cre; PB-XFP males. We induced ROSA-Cre expression in three adult males with Tamoxifen injection (10mg/ml in corn oil, 100µl/adult/day, for five consecutive days). We checked prostate for all of them, and none of them showed epithelial expression of fluorescent proteins (Fig. 4). We did observe some fluorescent signals in stromal cells. To check whether those signals are background noise, we harvested prostate from non-induced control animal (litter mate with same genotype) and did similar check (Fig.5). We also checked signals in kidney of induced animal, as well as that of non-induced control (Fig.5). No fluorescent signal was detected in epithelial cells in either prostate or other organs (Fig. 6, 7). However, we did see weak signals from neighboring stromal cells in the prostate tissue and cells in kidney in induced animals (Fig6, 7). To rule out the possibility of injection problems, we plan to detect Cre protein expression in the prostate. We are still waiting for the last two lines to produce male pups with correct genotype.

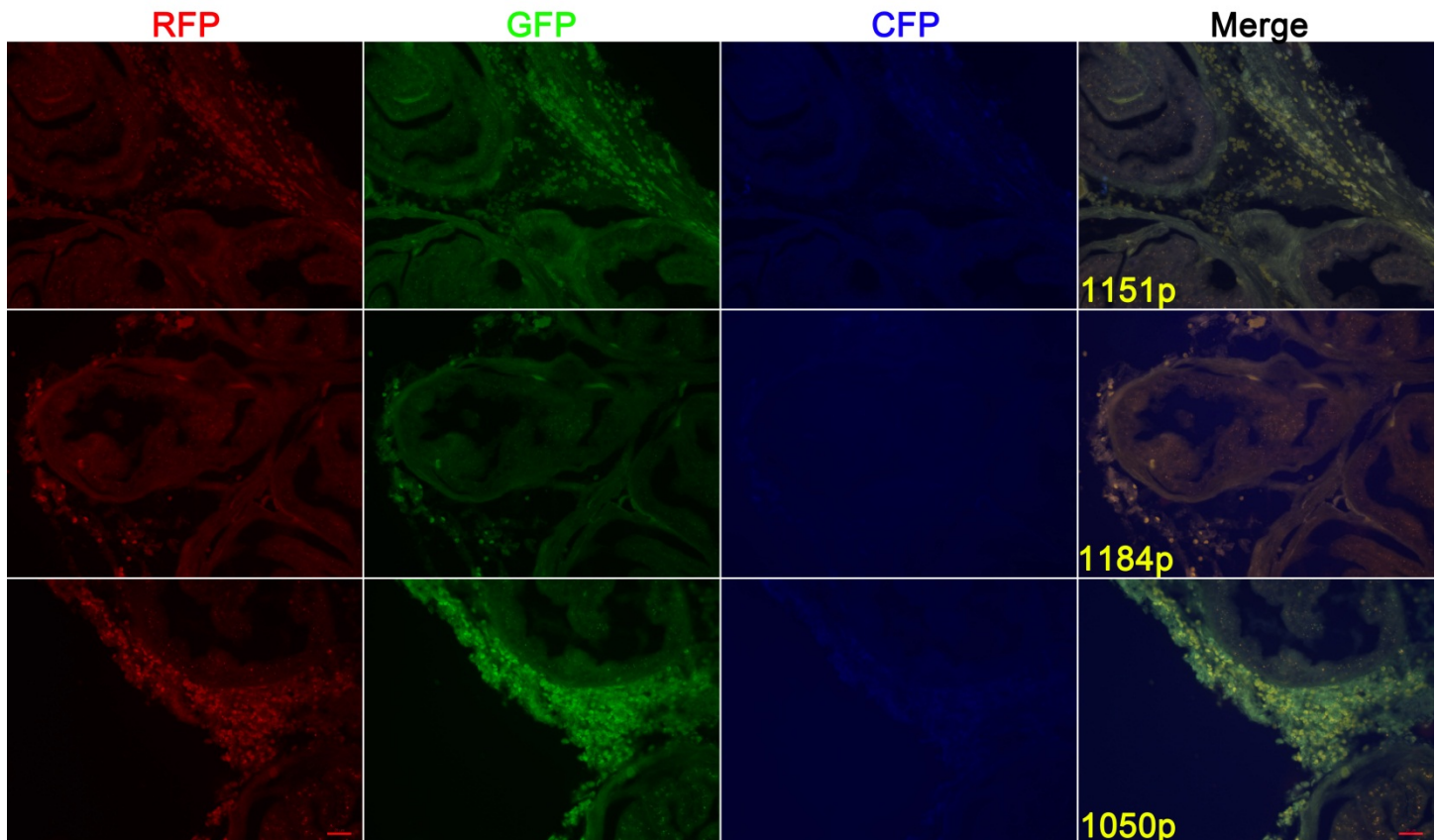




Figure 4 No epithelial XFP expression was observed in prostate tissue of ROSA-CreER; PB-XFP males induced with Tamoxifen. Paraffinized prostate sample were observed for endogenous fluorescent protein expression. #1151, #1184 and #1050 are male animals from line 511, 512 and 513, respectively. p stands for prostate tissue. Scale bar is 20µm.

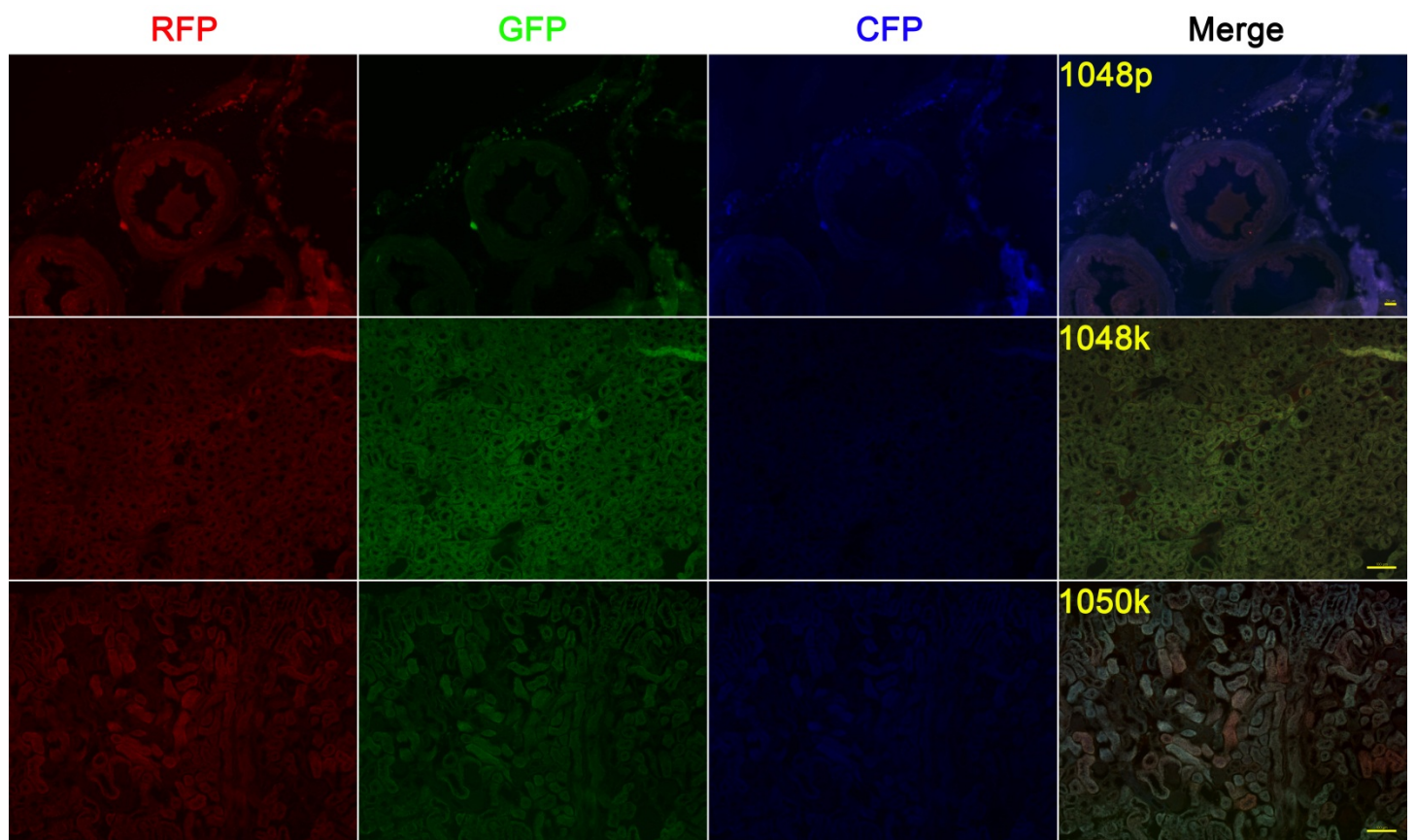


Figure 5 No epithelial XFP expression was observed in prostate or kidney tissue of ROSA-CreER; PB-XFP males that is not induced. Paraffinized prostate sample were observed for endogenous fluorescent protein expression. #1048 and #1050 are male animals from founder line 513. #1048 was non-induced, while #1050 was induced with Tamoxifen. p stands for prostate tissue. k stands for kidney tissue. Scale bar is 20µm.

For PB-Cre4 X CRK5-XFP breeding, there were fertility issues with PB-Cre; CRK5-XFP animals. Based on the difficulty with breeding, we switched to ROSA-Cre, and we got three lines with ROSA-Cre; CRK5-XFP (Fig. 1E, 2B). This breeding scheme worked out well. The induction is ongoing, and we will try the PB-Cre4 breeding as soon as we get young pups with CRK5-XFP transgenes.

For PB-Cre4 x CMV-XFP breeding, we got several mice with PB-Cre; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup> mice. We observed strong and distinct fluorescent signals in epithelial cells using both normal and confocal fluorescent microscopes (Fig.6, 7)



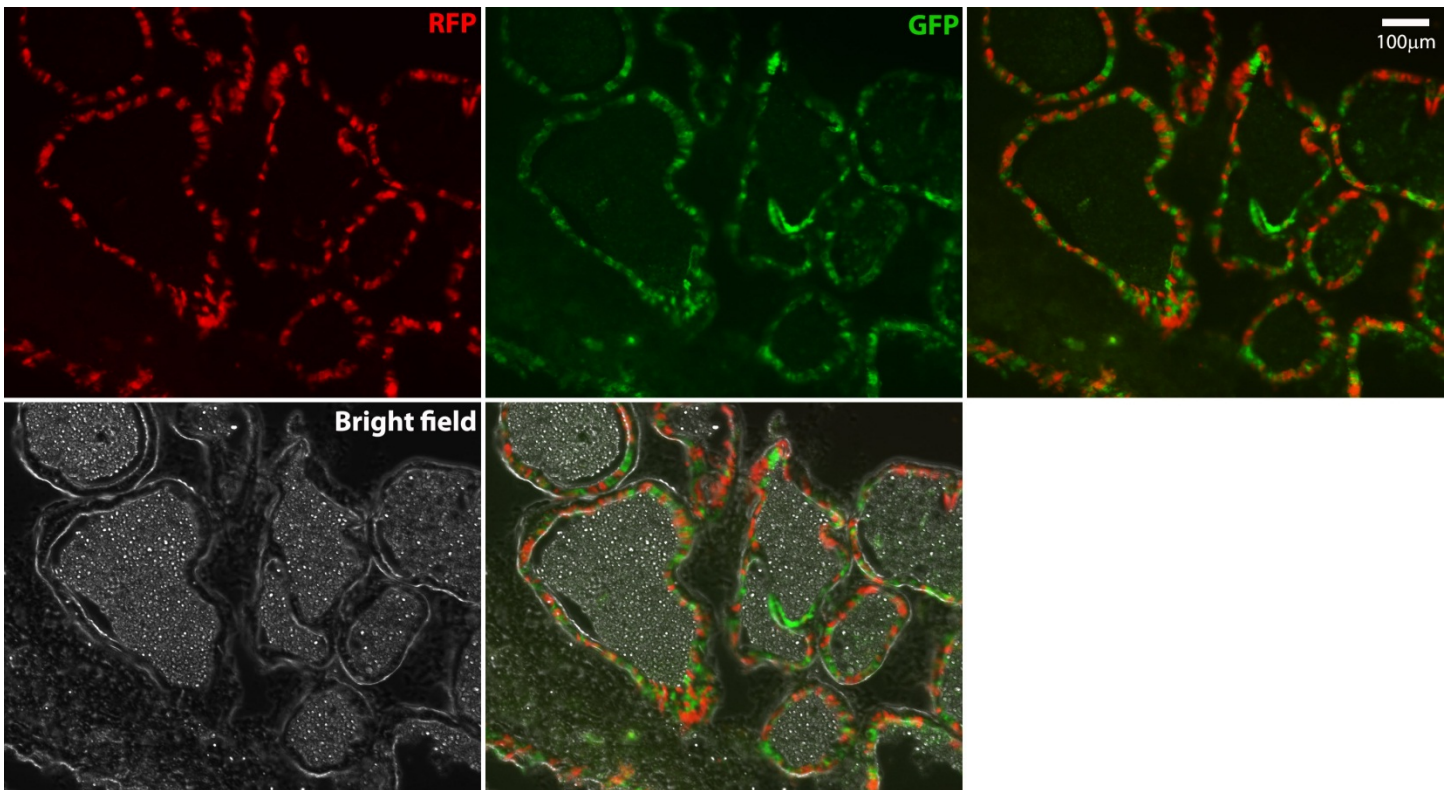


Figure 6 Fluorescent protein expression in frozen section of PB-Cre; Brainbow 2.1 lox/+ mouse prostate with normal fluorescent microscopy. Scale bar, 100µm.

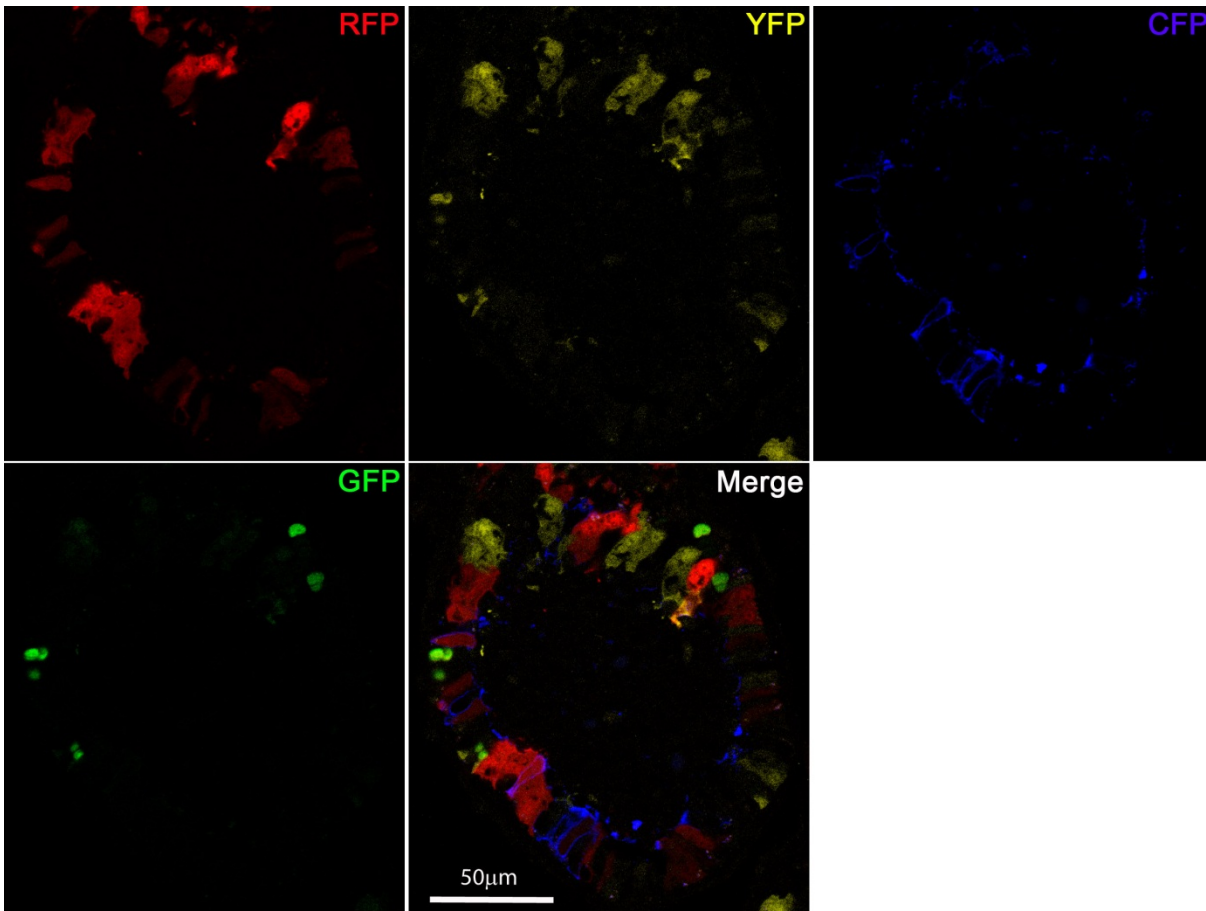
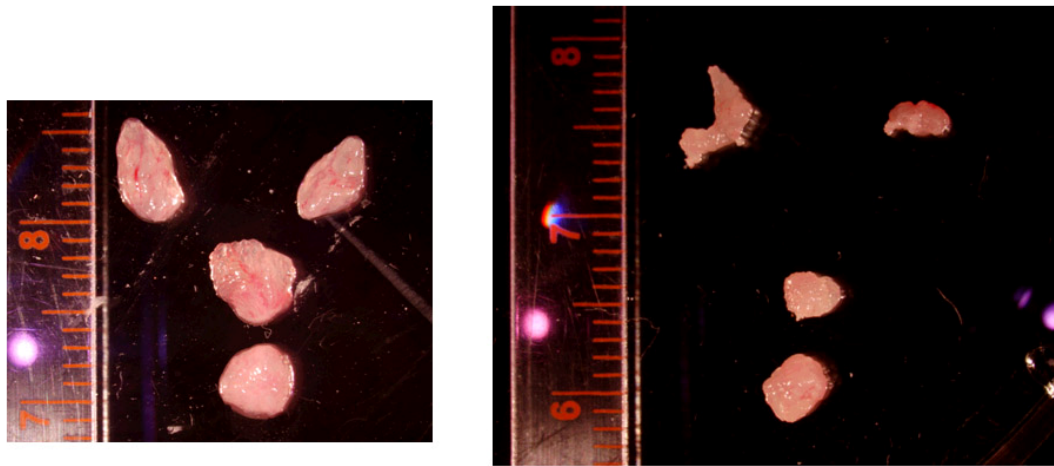


Figure 7 Fluorescent protein expression in frozen section of PB-Cre; Brainbow 2.1 lox/+ mouse prostate with confocal fluorescent microscopy. As expected, RFP and YFP localize in cytoplasm, CFP on cell membrane, and GFP in nucleus. Scale bar, 50µm.

We also harvested other organs (kidney and liver) and no XFP signals were detected in those organs. The results were confirmed with both IHC and endogenous protein check in frozen sections. We confirmed that the expression is strong and specific to prostate.

#### Task II. Study of Prorainbow and PTEN or PKD1 knock-out mice hybrids.

We harvested prostate, kidney and lung from PB-Cre4; PKD1 lox/lox; CMV-XFP/+ animals (PKD1 knock-out with Brainbow 2.1 expression) and from PB-Cre4; PKD1 lox/lox; PTEN lox/lox; CMV-XFP/+ animals (PKD1 PTEN double knock-out with Brainbow 2.1 expression). In PKD1 knock-out animals, we didn't observe obvious size difference between prostate tissues from knock-out animal and those from control littermate (Fig. 8). The prostate tissue was labeled with different fluorescent colors in PKD1 knock-out prostate (Fig. 9).



PKD1 KO (195 days)

Control littermate (195 days)

Figure 8 Prostate tissues harvested from PKD1 knock-out animal and control litter mate. No obvious size difference was observed. Top, anterior lobes; middle, dorsal-lateral lobes; bottom, ventral lobe.

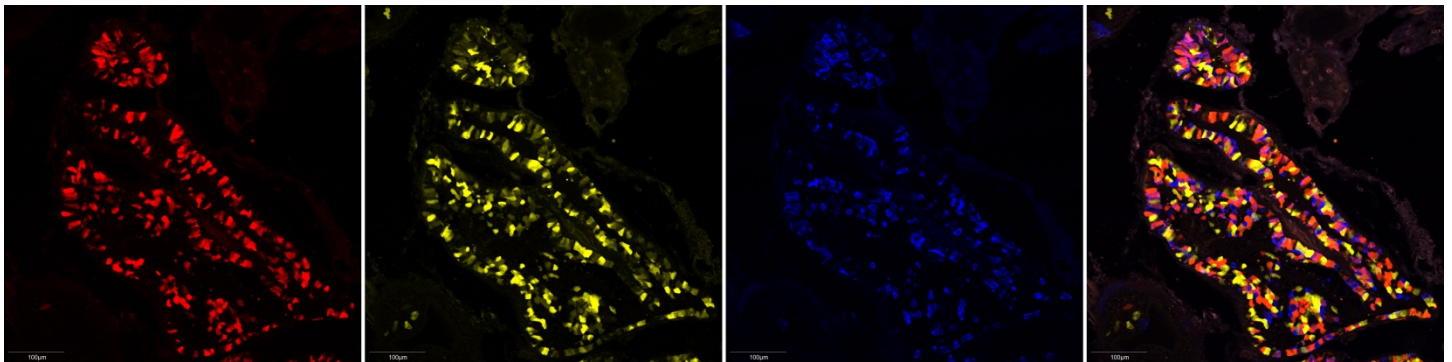


Figure 9 Fluorescent protein expression in frozen section of PB-Cre; PKD1 lox/lox; Brainbow 2.1 lox/+ mouse prostate with confocal fluorescent microscopy. Scale bar, 100µm.

In PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animals, however, we observed obvious prostate enlargement and cancer progression in prostate organ, while the other organs (kidney, liver and lung) didn't show any sign of tumor formation (Fig. 10). For the double knock-out animals, we did histological check with H&E staining to confirm the tumor formation (Fig. 11), and also checked other organs (kidney, liver and lung), but didn't find any metastatic lesion at 8 months (222 days old) (Fig. 12). XFP expression in prostate epithelial cells was strong and specific in double knock-out animal (Fig. 13).



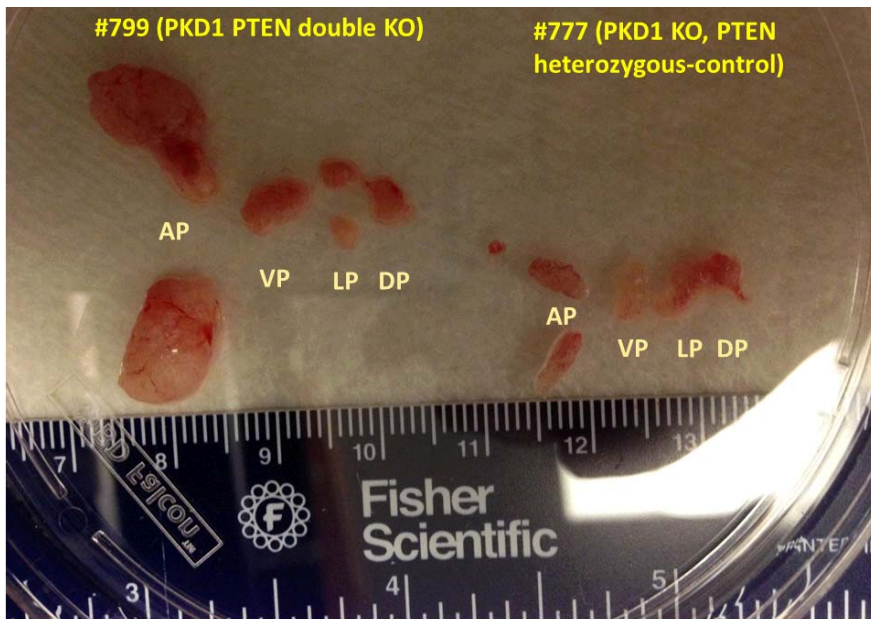
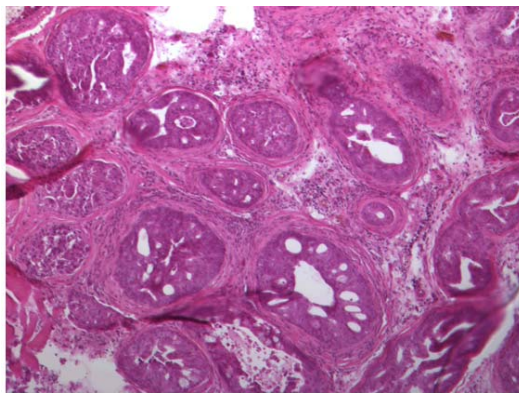
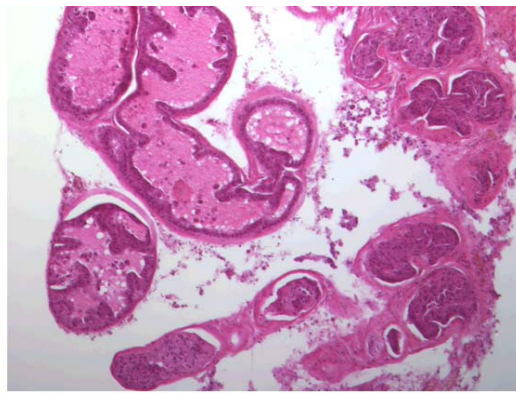


Figure 10 Prostate tissues harvested from PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animal and control litter mate. Prostate tissue from double knock-out animal was significantly increased. AP, anterior prostate; VP, ventral prostate; LP, lateral prostate; DP, dorsal prostate. Genotype of animal #799 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/lox</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Genotype of animal#777 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/+</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Animals were eight months old when prostate tissues were harvested.



#799 (PKD1 PTEN double KO)



#777 (control)

Figure 11 Histological analyses of prostate tissues from PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animal and control litter mate. Tissues were paraffinized and stained with H&E. Tumor progression and invasion were observed in double knock-out animals. Genotype of animal #799 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/lox</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Genotype of animal#777 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/+</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Animals were eight months old when prostate tissues were harvested.



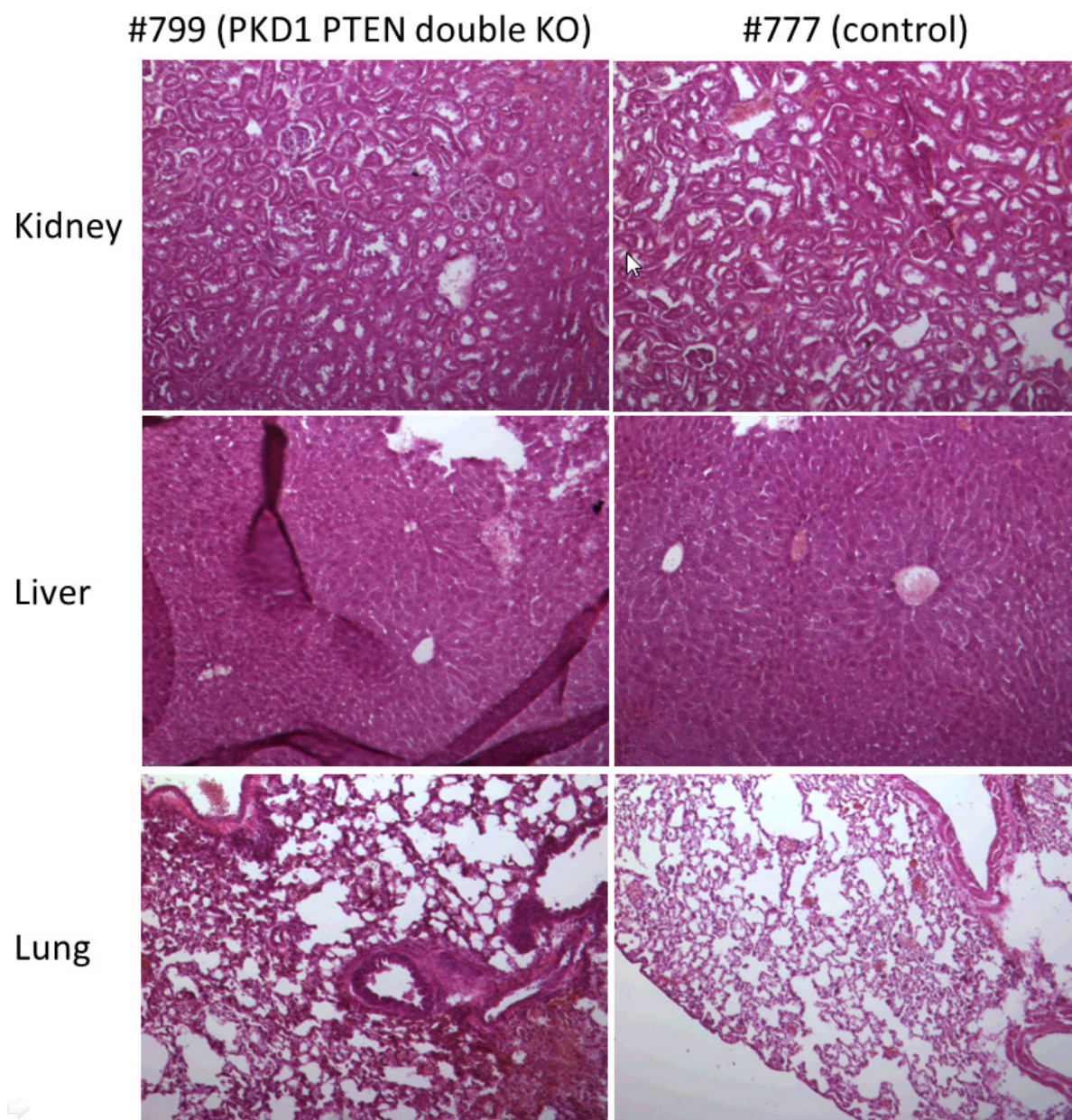


Figure 12 Histological analysis of lung tissues from PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animal and control litter mate. Tissues were paraffinized and stained with H&E. Tumor progression and invasion were observed in double knock-out animals. Genotype of animal #799 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/lox</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Genotype of animal#777 is PB-Cre4; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/+</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>. Animals were eight months old when prostate tissues were harvested.

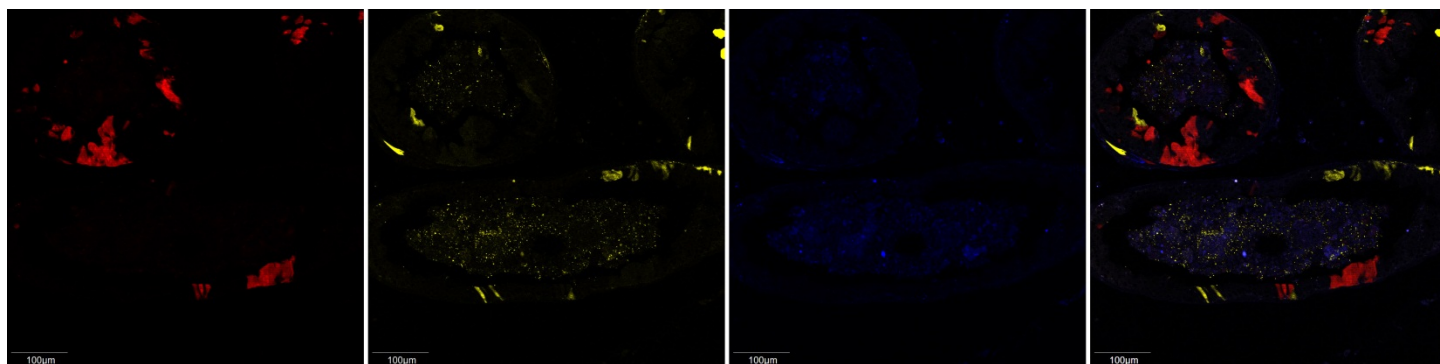


Figure 13 Fluorescent protein expression in frozen section of PB-Cre; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/lox</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup> mouse prostate with confocal fluorescent microscopy. Scale bar, 100µm.

Interestingly, quite a few cells lost XFP in prostate tissue in double knock-out animals (Fig. 13). In order to check whether loss of XFP expression is due to cell proliferation we carried out immunostaining with Ki67 protein (a cellular marker for proliferation), and observed co-expression of Ki67 signal and endogenous XFP signals in tumor cells (Fig. 14). The results suggest that loss of XFP expression was neither due to cell proliferation nor is specific to proliferating cells. We continue to breed the mice and monitor for metastasis. If metastatic cells are found, we will establish whether these cells have the same color spectrum (monoclonal) or diverse color spectra (polyclonal). We can also track back the prostate progenitors of the metastatic cells by matching the color spectra.

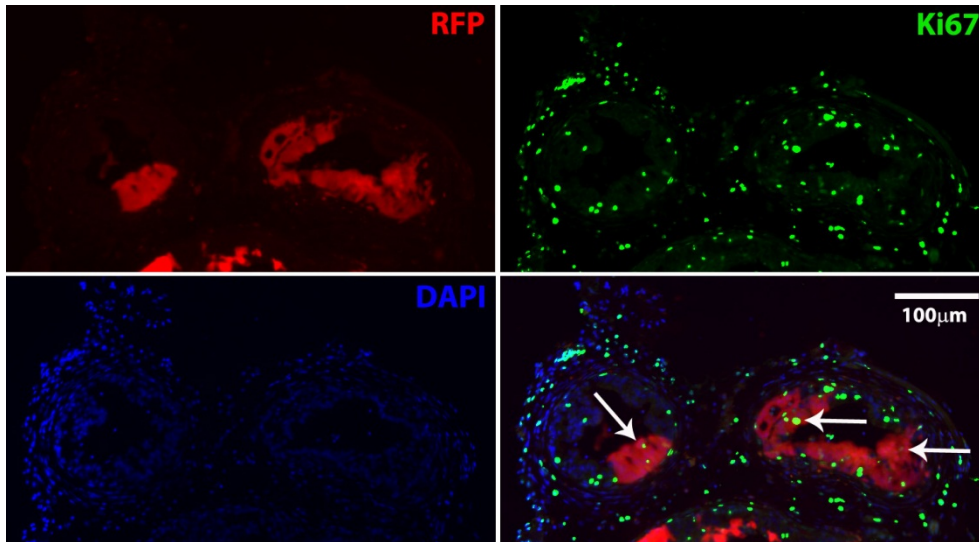


Figure 14 Fluorescent protein could label prostate tumor cells in double knock-out animal (genotype: PB-Cre; PKD1<sup>lox/lox</sup>; PTEN<sup>lox/lox</sup>; Brainbow 2.1<sup>lox/+</sup>). Frozen section was stained with anti-Ki67 antibody and DAPI. Arrows indicate proliferating epithelial cells (cancer cells in prostate) that are labeled with fluorescent proteins. Scale bar, 100µm.

We plan to finish this part in the following 6-12 months.

### Key research accomplishments

We successfully produced prostate specific PKD1 knock-out mouse and PKD1 PTEN double knock-out mouse with CMV-XFP (Brainbow 2.1) fluorescent signal in prostate. We confirmed that XFP signals could express specifically in prostate under PB-Cre4 control, and could label both tumor cells and normal cells. We didn't observe any sign of tumor progression in PKD1 knock-out animals at eight months, but we did see an obvious enlargement of prostate tissue in PKD1 PTEN double knock-out animal. Tumor progression was confirmed by H&E staining. We tested the PB-XFP and CRK5-XFP transgene expression in majority of transgenic animals, yet no transgenic line was approved to be expressing fluorescent proteins.

### Reportable outcomes

None.

### Conclusion

We could use CMV-XFP to specifically label normal cells and tumor cells in mouse prostate, and use the same color pattern to track back its cellular origin.

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